Carl Jung theory - Lecture notes

Introduction to Applied Psychology (K.R. Mangalam University)

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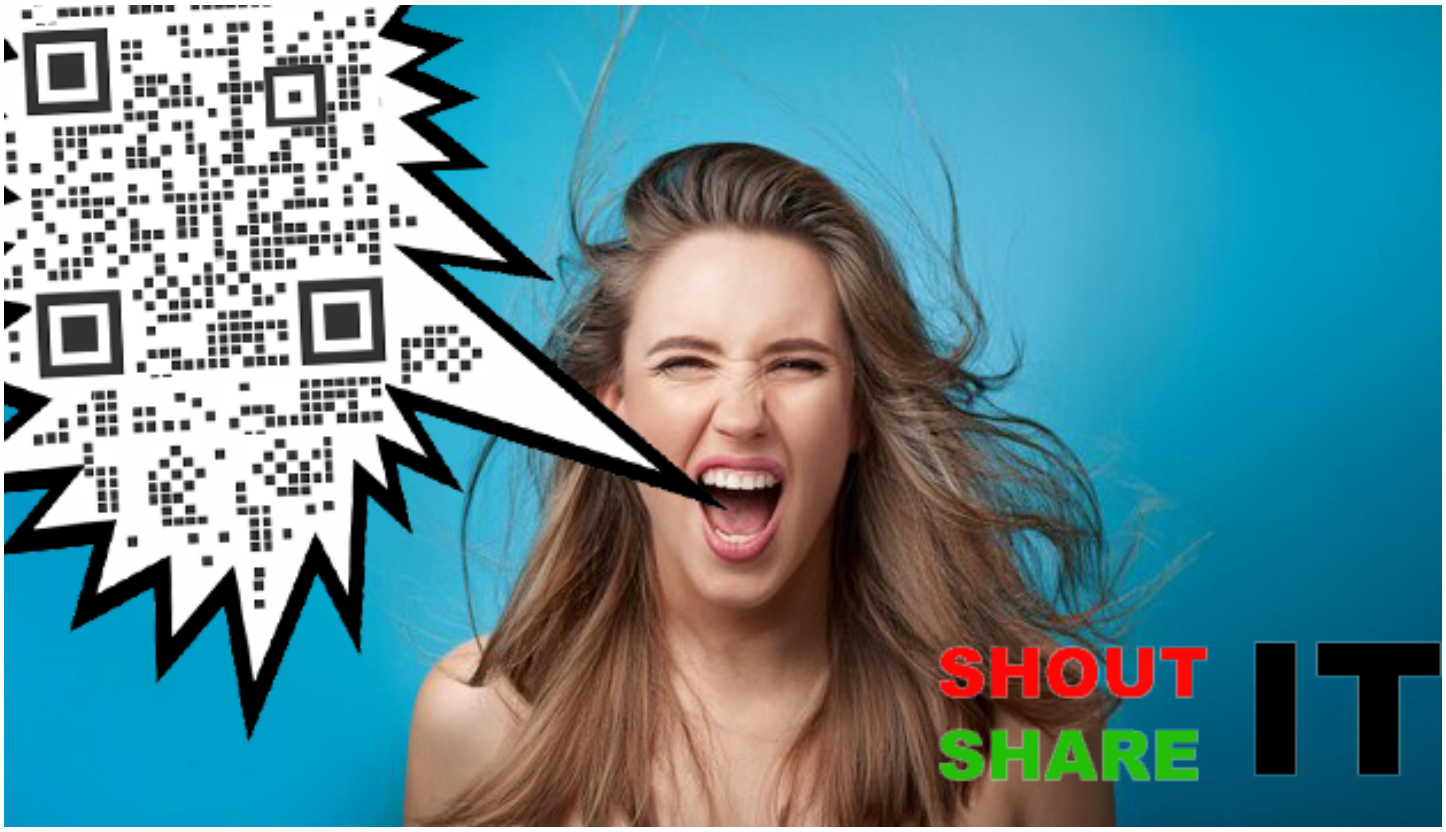
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analytical psychology Jung's theory of personality.

The first point on which Jung came to disagree with Freud was the role of sexuality. Jung broadened Freud's definition of libido by redefining it as a more generalized psychic energy that includes sex but is not restricted to it.

The second major area of disagreement concerns the direction of the forces that influence personality. Whereas Freud viewed human beings as prisoners or victims of past events, Jung argued that we are shaped by our future as well as our past. We are affected not only by what happened to us as children, but also by what we aspire to do in the future.

The third significant point of difference revolves around the unconscious. Rather than minimizing the role of the unconscious, as did the other neo psychoanalytic dissenters we discuss, Jung placed an even greater emphasis on it than Freud did. He probed more deeply into the unconscious and added a new dimension: the inherited experiences of human and prehuman species.

The Systems of Personality

In Jung's view, the total personality, or psyche, is composed of several distinct systems or structures that can influence one another. The major systems are the ego, the personal unconscious, and the collective unconscious.

- **The Ego**

The ego is the center of consciousness, the part of the psyche concerned with perceiving, thinking, feeling, and remembering. It is our awareness of ourselves and is responsible for carrying out the normal activities of waking life. The ego acts in a selective way, admitting into conscious awareness only a portion of the stimuli to which we are exposed.

- **The Attitudes: Extraversion and Introversion**

Jung believed that psychic energy could be channelled externally, toward the outside world, or internally, toward the self. Extraverts are open, sociable, and socially assertive, oriented toward other people and the external world. Introverts are withdrawn and often shy, and they tend to focus on themselves, on their own thoughts and feelings.

According to Jung, everyone has the capacity for both attitudes, but only one becomes dominant in the personality. The dominant attitude then tends to direct the person's behavior and consciousness. The nondominant attitude remains influential, however, and becomes part of the personal unconscious, where it can affect behavior. For example, in certain situations an introverted person may display characteristics of extraversion, wish to be more outgoing, or be attracted to an extravert.

- **Psychological Functions**

As Jung came to recognize that there were different kinds of extraverts and introverts, he proposed additional distinctions among people based on what he called the psychological functions. These functions refer to different and opposing ways of perceiving or apprehending both the external real world and our subjective inner world. Jung posited four functions of the psyche: sensing, intuiting, thinking, and feeling.

Sensing and intuiting are grouped together as nonrational functions; they do not use the processes of reason. These functions accept experiences and do not evaluate them. Sensing reproduces an

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experience through the senses the way a photograph copies an object. Intuiting does not arise directly from an external stimulus; for example, if we believe someone else is with us in a darkened room, our belief may be based on our intuition or a hunch rather than on actual sensory experience.

The second pair of opposing functions, thinking and feeling, are rational functions that involve making judgments and evaluations about our experiences. Although thinking and feeling are opposites, both are concerned with organizing and categorizing experiences. The thinking function involves a conscious judgment of whether an experience is true or false. The kind of evaluation made by the feeling function is expressed in terms of like or dislike, pleasantness or unpleasantness, stimulation or dullness.

Just as our psyche contains some of both the extraversion and introversion attitudes, so we have the capacity for all four psychological functions. And just as one attitude is dominant, so only one function is dominant. The others are submerged in the personal unconscious. Further, only one pair of functions is dominant—either the rational or the irrational—and within each pair only one function is dominant. A person cannot be ruled by both thinking and feeling or by both sensing and intuiting, because they are opposing functions.

- **Psychological Types**

Jung proposed eight psychological types, based on the interactions of the two attitudes and four functions To Jung, eight personality types based on interactions of the attitudes (introversion and extraversion) and the functions (thinking, feeling, sensing, and intuiting).

Extraverted thinking	Logical, objective, dogmatic
Extraverted feeling	Emotional, sensitive, sociable; more typical of women than men
Extraverted sensing	Outgoing, pleasure-seeking, adaptable
Extraverted intuiting	Creative, able to motivate others and to seize opportunities
Introverted thinking	More interested in ideas than in people
Introverted feeling	Reserved, undemonstrative, yet capable of deep emotion
Introverted sensing	Outwardly detached, expressing themselves in aesthetic pursuits
Introverted intuiting	More concerned with the unconscious than with everyday reality

The extraverted thinking type lives strictly in accordance with society's rules. These people tend to repress feelings and emotions, to be objective in all aspects of life, and to be dogmatic in thoughts and opinions. They may be perceived as rigid and cold. They tend to make good scientists because their focus is on learning about the external world and using logical rules to describe and understand it.

The extraverted feeling type tends to repress the thinking mode and to be highly emotional. These people conform to the traditional values and moral codes they have been taught. They are unusually sensitive to the opinions and expectations of others. They are emotionally responsive and make friends easily, and they tend to be sociable and effervescent. Jung believed this type was found more often among women than men.

The extraverted sensing type focuses on pleasure and happiness and on seeking new experiences. These people are strongly oriented toward the real world and are adaptable to different kinds of

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people and changing situations. Not given to introspection, they tend to be outgoing, with a high capacity for enjoying life.

The extraverted intuiting type finds success in business and politics because of a keen ability to exploit opportunities. These people are attracted by new ideas and tend to be creative. They are able to inspire others to accomplish and achieve. They also tend to be changeable, moving from one idea or venture to another, and to make decisions based more on hunches than on reflection. Their decisions, however, are likely to be correct.

The introverted thinking type does not get along well with others and has difficulty communicating ideas. These people focus on thought rather than on feelings and have poor practical judgment. Intensely concerned with privacy, they prefer to deal with abstractions and theories, and they focus on understanding themselves rather than other people. Others see them as stubborn, aloof, arrogant, and inconsiderate.

The introverted feeling type represses rational thought. These people are capable of deep emotion but avoid any outward expression of it. They seem mysterious and inaccessible and tend to be quiet, modest, and childish. They have little consideration for others' feelings and thoughts and appear withdrawn, cold, and self-assured.

The introverted sensing type appears passive, calm, and detached from the everyday world. These people look on most human activities with benevolence and amusement. They are aesthetically sensitive, expressing themselves in art or music, and tend to repress their intuition.

The introverted intuiting type focuses so intently on intuition that people of this type have little contact with reality. These people are visionaries and daydreamers— aloof, unconcerned with practical matters, and poorly understood by others. Considered odd and eccentric, they have difficulty coping with everyday life and planning for the future.

- **The Personal Unconscious**

The personal unconscious in Jung's system is similar to Freud's conception of the pre-conscious. It is a reservoir of material that was once conscious but has been forgotten or suppressed because it was trivial or disturbing. There is considerable two-way traffic between the ego and the personal unconscious. For example, our attention can wander readily from this printed page to a memory of something we did yesterday. All kinds of experiences are stored in the personal unconscious; it can be likened to a filing cabinet. Little mental effort is required to take something out, examine it for a while, and put it back, where it will remain until the next time, we want it or are reminded of it.

- **The Collective Unconscious**

The deepest and least accessible level of the psyche, the collective unconscious is the most unusual and controversial aspect of Jung's system; to critics, it is the most bizarre. Jung believed that just as each of us accumulates and files all of our personal experiences in the personal unconscious, so does humankind collectively, as a species, store the experiences of the human and prehuman species in the collective unconscious. This heritage is passed to each new generation.

Whatever experiences are universal—that is, are repeated relatively unchanged by each generation —become part of our personality. Our primitive past becomes the basis of the human psyche, directing and influencing present behavior. To Jung, the collective unconscious was the powerful and controlling repository of ancestral experiences. Thus, Jung linked each person's personality with the past, not only with childhood but also with the history of the species. We do not inherit these

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collective experiences directly. For example, we do not inherit a fear of snakes. Rather, we inherit the potential to fear snakes. We are predisposed to behave and feel the same ways people have always behaved and felt. Whether the predisposition becomes reality depends on the specific experiences each of us encounters in life.

Jung believed that certain basic experiences have characterized every generation throughout human history. People have always had a mother figure, for example, and have experienced birth and death. They have faced unknown terrors in the dark, worshipped power or some sort of godlike figure, and feared an evil being. The universality of these experiences over countless evolving generations leaves an imprint on each of us at birth and determines how we perceive and react to our world. Jung wrote, “The form of the world into which [a person] is born is already inborn in him, as a virtual image.

A baby is born predisposed to perceive the mother in a certain way. Assuming the mother behaves the way mothers typically behave, in a nurturing and supportive manner, then the baby’s predisposition will correspond with its reality.

Because the collective unconscious is such an unusual concept, it is important to note the reason Jung proposed it and the kind of evidence he gathered to support it. In his reading about ancient cultures, both mythical and real, Jung discovered what he believed to be common themes and symbols that appeared in diverse parts of the world. As far as he could determine, these ideas had not been transmitted or communicated orally or in writing from one culture to another.

In addition, Jung’s patients, in their dreams and fantasies, recalled and described for him the same kinds of symbols he had discovered in ancient cultures. He could find no other explanation for these shared symbols and themes over such vast geographical and temporal distances than that they were transmitted by and carried in each person’s unconscious mind.

- **Archetypes**

The ancient experiences contained in the collective unconscious are manifested by recurring themes or patterns Jung called archetypes (Jung, 1947). He also used the term primordial images. There are many such images of universal experiences, as many as there are common human experiences. By being repeated in the lives of succeeding generations, archetypes have become imprinted on our psyche and are expressed in our dreams and fantasies.

Among the archetypes Jung proposed are the hero, the mother, the child, God, death, power, and the wise old man. A few of these are developed more fully than others and influence the psyche more consistently. These major archetypes include the persona, the anima and animus, the shadow, and the self.

The word persona refers to a mask that an actor wears to display various roles or faces to the audience. Jung used the term with basically the same meaning. The persona archetype is a mask, a public face we wear to present ourselves as someone different from who we really are. The persona is necessary, Jung believed, because we are forced to play many roles in life in order to succeed in school and on the job and to get along with a variety of people.

Although the persona can be helpful, it can also be harmful. We may come to believe the persona reflects our true nature. Instead of merely playing a role, we may become that role. As a result, other aspects of our personality will not be allowed to develop. Jung described the process this way: The ego may come to identify with the persona rather than with the person’s true nature, resulting in a condition known as inflation of the persona. Whether the person plays a role or comes to believe

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that role, he or she is resorting to deception. In the first instance, the person is deceiving others; in the second instance, the person is deceiving himself or herself.

The anima and animus archetypes refer to Jung's recognition that humans are essentially bisexual. On the biological level, each sex secretes the hormones of the other sex as well as those of its own sex. On the psychological level, each sex manifests characteristics, temperaments, and attitudes of the other sex by virtue of centuries of living together. The psyche of the woman contains masculine aspects (the animus archetype), and the psyche of the man contains feminine aspects (the anima archetype).

These opposite sex characteristics aid in the adjustment and survival of the species because they enable a person of one sex to understand the nature of the other sex. The archetypes predispose us to like certain characteristics of the opposite sex; these characteristics guide our behavior with reference to the opposite sex.

Jung insisted that both the anima and the animus must be expressed. A man must exhibit his feminine as well as his masculine characteristics, and a woman must express her masculine characteristics along with her feminine ones. Otherwise, these vital aspects will remain dormant and undeveloped, leading to a one-sidedness of the personality.

The most powerful archetype Jung proposed has the sinister and mysterious name of the shadow, which contains the basic, primitive animal instincts and therefore has the deepest roots of all the archetypes. Behaviors that society considers evil and immoral reside in the shadow, and this dark side of human nature must be tamed if people are to live in harmony. We must restrain, overcome, and defend against these primitive impulses. If we do not, society will likely punish us.

But we face a dilemma. Not only is the shadow the source of evil, it is also the source of vitality, spontaneity, creativity, and emotion. Therefore, if the shadow is totally suppressed, the psyche will be dull and lifeless. It is the ego's function to repress the animal instincts enough so that we are considered civilized while allowing sufficient expression of the instincts to provide creativity and vigor.

If the shadow is fully suppressed, not only does the personality become flat, but the person also faces the possibility that the shadow will revolt. The animal instincts do not disappear when they are suppressed. Rather, they lie dormant, awaiting a crisis or a weakness in the ego so they can gain control. When that happens, the person becomes dominated by the unconscious.

The self archetype represents the unity, integration, and harmony of the total personality. To Jung, the striving toward that wholeness is the ultimate goal of life. This archetype involves bringing together and balancing all parts of the personality. We have already noted Jung's principle of opposites and the importance of polarities to the psyche. In the self archetype, conscious and unconscious processes become assimilated so that the self, which is the center of the personality, shifts from the ego to a point of equilibrium midway between the opposing forces of the conscious and the unconscious. As a result, material from the unconscious comes to have a greater influence on the personality.

The full realization of the self lies in the future. It is a goal—something to strive for but rarely achieved. The self serves as a motivating force, pulling us from ahead rather than pushing us from behind (as with our past experiences).

The self cannot begin to emerge until the other systems of the psyche have developed. This occurs around middle age, a crucial period of transition in Jung's system, as it was in his own life. The

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actualization of the self involves goals and plans for the future and an accurate perception of one's abilities. Because development of the self is impossible without self-knowledge, it is the most difficult process we face in life and requires persistence, perceptiveness, and wisdom.

- **Jung's developmental stages**

Childhood Ego development begins when the child distinguishes between self and others.

Puberty to young adulthood Adolescents must adapt to the growing demands of reality. The focus is external, on education, career, and family. The conscious is dominant.

Middle age A period of transition when the focus of the personality shifts from external to internal in an attempt to balance the unconscious with the conscious.

Criticism of Carl Jung's Theory of Personality

Jung's theory of personality, especially his ideas about the collective unconscious and archetypes, has drawn a variety of criticisms:

1. Lack of Empirical Support

- **Unverifiable Concepts**: Jung's ideas of the collective unconscious, archetypes, and synchronicity are often criticized for being abstract, mystical, and difficult to prove scientifically. These concepts lack clear empirical evidence and are not easily testable through experimentation.
- **Over-reliance on Subjective Experience**: Jung's work frequently draws from mythology, dreams, art, and religious symbols, which are subjective in nature. Critics argue that relying on such subjective interpretations reduces the scientific validity of his theories.

2. Vagueness and Ambiguity

- Jung's key concepts, such as archetypes (e.g., the Shadow, the Anima/Animus, the Self), are often criticized for being too vague and difficult to define. The lack of precise definitions makes it hard to apply these ideas consistently across different individuals and contexts.

3. Esoteric and Mystical Elements

- **Spiritual and Occult Themes**: Jung's exploration of spirituality, mysticism, alchemy, and Eastern philosophy, while innovative, has been viewed by some critics as departing from traditional psychological science. His interest in phenomena like synchronicity (meaningful coincidences) and the paranormal has been seen as promoting pseudoscience by some scholars.

4. Overemphasis on Universalism

- Critics argue that Jung's idea of a "collective unconscious" and universal archetypes may overlook cultural and individual differences. His emphasis on shared symbols and myths can be seen as culturally biased, as many of the archetypal symbols Jung explored are rooted in Western traditions and may not apply universally.

5. Complexity and Accessibility

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- Jung’s theories are often viewed as overly complex, making them difficult for laypeople and even professionals to grasp fully. The dense, symbolic nature of his writings can be seen as inaccessible and less practical for clinical application compared to other psychological models.

6. Reduction of Individual Experiences

- While Jung emphasized individuation (the process of becoming one's true self), his focus on universal archetypes and shared unconscious patterns has been criticized for downplaying the uniqueness of individual experiences and personalities.

7. Lack of Focus on External Environment

- Similar to Freud, Jung's theory heavily emphasizes internal psychic structures (e.g., the personal and collective unconscious), often at the expense of external social, cultural, and environmental factors that influence behavior and personality development.

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